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ABSTRACT

The Literacy Prescription Project has served 250 clients in Illinois by providing individualized instruction and complete diagnostic reports--developing four profiles of adult disabled readers who can be treated with associated instructional techniques. Profile One adults cannot read the simplest pre-primer text and can only recognize a few words such as their name. It may be extremely difficult or impossible to teach these adults to read. Instructional strategies for these adults include language experience stories, environmental print books, and word banks and sorts. Profile Two adults have slightly higher reading levels than individuals in Profile One; they appear to be learners who did not learn to read in school because of environmental concerns. With proper tutoring, these adults should be able to read the newspaper and easy to read books. Instructional strategies include "written conversation," flash cards, and prediction exercises. Profile Three readers have a misunderstanding of the reading process: most believe reading is a process of sounding out words or memorizing vocabulary. Instructional strategies focus on modeling of good reading habits by the tutor and exercises designed to improve predictive abilities. Profile Four adults are readers but often choose not to read. They lack self-confidence in their academic abilities. Strategies for these adults include text mapping, key word search and prediction strategies, and summarizing strategies. Tutors and adult basic education instructors are encouraged to use any or all of the strategies described. (RS)

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THE LITERACY PRESCRIPTION: PROFILES OF ADULT READERS WITH RECOMMENDED INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

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During the summer of 1985, we organized our community's first adult literacy volunteer project. We recruited and provided twenty-four (24) hours of initial training for our volunteers. Thereafter monthly training meetings of three hours each were provided. Midway through the initial training, each volunteer was placed with an adult who had requested assistance. Most tutoring took place on our campus; we had the luxury of working continuously with our volunteers. As time progressed, one important thing became very evident to us. Several of our volunteers were working with adults who had problems which required more in-depth diagnosis than our volunteers had been trained to do. Over half of the adults being tutored needed glasses; about two-thirds had auditory discrimination problems and several were simply not progressing. It occurred to us that other programs might be facing similar problems.

In 1986 we received funding from the Office of the Secretary of State and the Illinois State Library for a grant called "The Literacy Prescription". As project directors we wanted to provide a unique support service for volunteer tutors and adult basic education (ABE) instructors.

Most literacy volunteers receive less than 12 hours of training. Few ABE instructors have had course work in methods to teach adult disabled readers. Simply stated, the Literacy Prescription provides individualized diagnostic testing and offers instructional suggestions. Our diagnosticians included current and former graduate students who majored in reading. In addition to expertise in reading, many of these diagnosticians had undergraduate teaching majors in fields such as speech and hearing, special education and educational psychology.

The diagnostic tests used with each client varied but generally they included the Keystone School Vision Screening Test (1972), the Wepman Auditory Discrimination Test (1986), the Basic Reading Inventory (Johns, 1985), the Burke Reading Interview, and the Slosson Intelligence Test (1984). (The Slosson was used to determine general strengths and weaknesses in academic areas. It was not used as an IQ measurement.) A series of screening tests based upon Jordan's Dyslexia in the Classroom (1977) were administered when it was felt such instruments were appropriate.

Prescriptive instructional suggestions came from a computer data base of over 100 strategies developed by the authors. About one-third of the strategies in the data base are "time honored" techniques such as the language experience approach, VAKT and the Request procedure. The remaining two-thirds are "original" strategies devised by us, often with the assistance of our graduate students. Feedback regarding the effectiveness of these strategies was provided by adult literacy volunteers, ABE instructors and their students.

To date, the Literacy Prescription has served 250 clients by providing complete diagnostic reports. An analysis of the data from the 250 diagnostic reports established four separately identifiable profiles of adult disabled readers. The remainder of this report discusses these four emergent profiles and describes what we consider to be optional instructional techniques for each.

To organize our data, we simply labeled our adults as Profiles 1, 2, 3 and 4. A summary of our project findings follows.

PROFILES OF ADULTS TESTED*

	PROFILE 1 n = 55 (22%)	PROFILE 2 n = 6l (24%)	PROFILE 3 n = 49 (20%)	PROFILE 4 n = 72 (29%)
Reading Levels				
Independent (able to read alone)	0.3	0.7	2.7	5.7
Instructional (able to read with help)	0.5	1.3	4.1	7.2
Frustration (unable to read)	1.0	1.9	5.2	8.2
Listening (estimated potential)	1.8	6.2	6.0	9.0
Have Vision Problems	80%	74%	69%	52%
Have Auditory Discrimination Problems	66%	45%	40%	31%
Views Reading**				
As "sounds"	71%	58%	55%	50%
As "words"	14%	26%	25%	22%
As "meaning"	0%	3%	20%	25%
Have a Specific Language Disability	59%	56%	28%	31%
Last Grade Completed	7.9	7.7	9.4	10.2
Average Age	40	35	35	32
Sex				
Male	45%	62%	51%	49%
Female	55%	38%	49%	51%

* Data does not include a category called "Other" (n=13) and does not include adults tested for vision or hearing only.

** Some individuals could not respond as they had no concept of print.

PROFILE ONE

This is the lowest reading ability group and constitutes slightly over one-fifth of the population we tested. Adults in Profile One cannot read even the simplest pre-primer text and at most can read only a few words such as their name. When text is read to them, they can understand up to the 1st or 2nd grade level. Without exception, this group had extremely limited general knowledge and were unable to repeat short sentences, could not add single digit numbers, and had difficulty copying short paragraphs. One man in this profile did not know the names of his own children and said his age was either 15 or 51. Another was a Viet Nam veteran who was a recovering alcoholic, had received shock treatments for depression, was heavily medicated, and was going through a difficult divorce. One woman told us she did not have a middle name because she was not married.

A few adults in Profile One were unable to live independently. Some were living with elderly parents who were very concerned about their child's welfare if they became ill and could no longer care for their son or daughter. Almost all the adults in Profile One had been working with a volunteer tutor or were enrolled in an ABE program for over one year and had made very little progress. We are not optimistic about Profile One adults. We feel literacy coordinators and ABE instructors should be very cautious about assigning a volunteer tutor to work with these individuals. At best, with expert help, these individuals might read at the first grade level; for the most part they will never read beyond a few survival words. The combination of very limited experiences (possible borderline mental retardation), multiple physical disabilities, and severe language disabilities,

makes this client an extremely difficult if not impossible person to teach to read. Many volunteer tutors become personally involved with their students. They want desperately to help and find it very difficult to end the tutoring even though little if any gain was made.

If Profile One adults are assigned a tutor, we recommend the following sample strategies:

LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE STORIES

Description

This is a meaning-making approach to reading that has proven highly successful for many years in helping non-readers to read and poor readers to improve their reading.

Directions

1. The tutee tells the tutor everything he knows about something he is interested in. The tutor lists this information on a piece of paper. The tutor goes over the list of information with the tutee. This information becomes the basis of a story.

2. The tutor writes this story on a second sheet of paper word-for-word, saying each word as he writes it.

3. When the tutee has finished dictating the story, the tutor reads it back to him and asks if there are any changes he would like to make.

4. After the desired changes are made, the tutor reads the story aloud again.

5. Then the tutor and the tutee read the story aloud together. This may be repeated several times if necessary.

6. When the tutee feels comfortable with the story, he reads it aloud on his own. With this activity, the tutor should also spot check for sight vocabulary. Words the learner has difficulty with could be put on sight word cards for additional practice.

7. The tutor dictates the story into a tape recorder for the tutee to listen to and read along with at home.

8. Additional activities are:
   Each week the tutee could choose spelling words to learn from his stories. For the next session, the tutor could type the story, leaving blanks where the spelling words appear. This type of spelling test also helps to build the tutee's reading comprehension as he had to guess the missing words from context.

Language Experience Approach with Cloze Exercise

After the tutee has written several Language Experience Approach stories, and is comfortable with reading these stories, the tutor should use the same stories but leave blank slots in which the learner must fill in the blanks. Select key words for the blanks. Emphasize to the tutee that he can use his "brain" to figure out the blank word because he already knows the story.

Instructional Principle

The more one knows about a topic and the more meaningful it is to him directly relates to how easy it is to read. Non-readers and very poor readers are motivated to read their own stores. They know about the topic because it is their own, so lack of background knowledge is not an issue. The tape recorded practice as part of this strategy gives the tutee a chance to virtually memorize the story. This memorization resembles a stage of reading most beginning readers go through.

ENVIRONMENTAL PRINT BOOK

Description

The tutee prepares a book of words from the immediate environment of the tutee. A photo album works best for this activity. If one is not available, a spiral notebook or three-ring binder is recommended.

Directions

1. Share with the tutee a number of advertisements from the Sunday edition newspaper.

2. Ask your tutee to cut out all the ads that he recognizes such as "McDonald's", cereal ads, "K-Mart", "Coca-Cola", etc. Ask your tutee to "read the ad. The tutor then circles McDonald's, K-Mart, etc., words in the ad. These should be discussed.

3. Write the circled word on a 3x5 card in bold face print.

4. Place the ad on a page of the book with the 3x5 card next to or below it.

5. Place several ads and their respective word cards on each page of the book.

6. Review those ad words each time you meet with your tutee until they are identified instantly.

Instructional Principle

This book and the Language Experience stories become the first reading "book" for the non or almost non-reader. Most adults can recognize many print words in their environment in the context of the logo or ad. They often do not read the word "McDonald's" as much as they recognize the golden arch; however, they do know McDonald's is a part of that logo. By separating the word "McDonald's" from the entire logo and labeling it a word on the 3x5 card, the non-reader begins to build a sight vocabulary of environmental print words. The goal is to help the learners seem themselves as readers.

WORD BANKS and SORTS

Description

As the tutee learns or encounters an important new word, the word is written on a card. These words become a part of a "bank" of words. Words from the tutee's Language Experience stories and environmental print books would be logical initial words in this word bank.

Directions

1. Write an important new word on a 3x5 card. This word should be one that is somewhat familiar to your tutee.

2. On the back of the card, put a picture or any other graphic that would help the tutee identify the word.

3. Place this word card in a special place such as a plastic recipe card holder or a shoe box.

4. Each time you meet with your tutee go over some or all of these cards. This will help your tutee build his sight vocabulary.

5. As your tutee becomes more familiar with these words, use them as flashcards.

WORD BANK SORTING

Description

When your tutee has collected about 25 or more cards in his word bank, the cards can be sorted.

Directions

1. Ask your tutee to sort the cards into categories provided by you. For example, put all the words starting with "b" in one pile and "c" in another. Initial consonants can be taught by this procedure.

2. Have your tutee sort the words into other categories such as "thing" words in one pile, "people" words in another pile, and the rest in a third pile.

3. Develop other categories for your tutee to sort. Categories might include: things the tutee likes or does not like; words associated with food, or cars, or children; holiday words; sport words; work words, etc.

4. Invite your tutee to take his pile of words and put them into categories created by himself. Make this a game by your trying to guess the category or categories your tutee has created. If you do this with a group of learners, put them into groups of two and have them exchange their piles of cards and guess each other's "sorts".

Instructional Principle

A word bank consisting of words the tutee has encountered while being read to or while trying to read himself is a much more powerful collection of words than an arbitrary vocabulary list. It is important that the tutee build a sight vocabulary so he feels he can "read" some words and does not have to depend upon sounding out each word.

The sorting of the words gives the tutor a chance to teach initial consonant phonic skills as well as other word categorizing skills.

PREDICTABLE SORTS

Description

Predictable stories are written with predictable patterns. These make the story very easy to read.

Directions

1. Read stories that are highly predictable from such sources as Bill Martin's little books published by Holt, Rinehart and Winston. There are many commercially produced predictable books.

2. After you read the story, ask your tutee to read the story back to you. Help the tutee until he can read the entire story successfully.

3. Make up predictable stories around the interest of the tutee. If he is interested in cars, for example, make up a predictable car story. It might read something like this:

I wanted to see how fast my car
would go.
By the end of the first block
I was going 30 miles per hour.
By the end of the second block

I was going 40 miles per hour.
By the end of the third block
I was going 50 miles per hour.
Etc.

Instructional Principle

The non-reader is helped tremendously by a predictable text. If the pattern in the story is repetitive, the tutee can figure out the pattern and read the story successfully. Predictability should be a strong criteria for selecting stories for adults with severe reading disabilities. These stories provide many successful reading experiences.

PROFILE TWO

Profile Two adults have slightly higher independent (.7 vs. .3) and instructional (.5 vs. 1.3) reading levels than individuals in Profile One. Like Profile One, many Profile Two adults (74%) had vision problems; almost half had auditory discrimination problems. They differ from Profile One adults in one very significant way. These learners had a much higher listening (capacity) level. They were able to listen to material read to them and adequately retell what they heard at the fifth and sixth grade levels.

Profile Two adults appear to be learners who did not learn to read in grade school due to environmental reasons. One man was one of twenty-one children who had lived in rural Arkansas until he was twelve years old. He then moved to Chicago to live with his sister and attend a vocational school. Unaccustomed to life in a large city and unable to relate to his peers, he dropped out of school at age fourteen. Another Profile Two adult

told us his teachers would bribe him to attend school; he attended a one-room school house and was absent about two-thirds of each term.

Several Profile Two learners had sporadic school attendance due to family strife. Many had to care for younger siblings; several had to go to work to earn additional finances for their family. We're optimistic about Profile Two adults. We feel with proper tutoring, these learners will reach a level of literacy which will allow them to read a local newspaper and easy to read books.

The following strategies are among those we recommend for Profile Two learners. The strategies from the previous group may also be used if they learner is almost a non-reader.

WRITTEN CONVERSATION

Description

Written conversation is an enjoyable reading/writing activity for Profile Two readers. It is a version of Language Experience and was developed by Carolyn Burke (1985). Instead of talking "out loud" about something, a conversation is written. You might write about a specific event that you both know about, such as a bad thunderstorm, your feelings about home, about children, or something as simple as what you have done since your last tutoring session.

Directions

1. The conversation is started by the tutor who briefly writes down on a sheet of paper what she wants to "say" about the topic selected.
2. The tutor then hands the sheet to the tutee, who reads the comment and responds with one of his own.
3. The tutee hands the sheet back to the tutor, and this process continues until they have no more to "say" during the time or space allotted by the tutor.
4. Next, take a few minutes to orally discuss what has been written.

5. If the tutor cannot read the tutee's writing, the tutee should still be encouraged to "write" even if it is little more than scribbling. However, after the tutee finishes his "writing", the tutor may ask him to "read" it aloud. Then the tutor can respond in writing to the tutee.

6. If the tutee cannot read the tutor's writing, the tutor will write first and then read aloud what was written pointing to the words so the tutee can follow the writing as it is read to him.

Instructional Principle

Written conversation connects reading and writing and helps develop fluency in both. It reduces the threat and increases the interest in both reading and writing. It also reinforces the partially correct adage that reading is "speech written down".

FLASH CARD DIRECTIONS

Description

Flash card directions is an activity that forces the Profile Two word callers to read more than one word at a time.

1. On an index card, the tutor writes a direction of five to ten words, such as "Put your hands on the table" or "Please stand up, then sit down".

2. Flash each card asking your tutee to do what the card says. Often your tutee will only read the first few words. Encourage "chunking" all the words in one glance.

3. Flash the card again and explain that he must read ahead and look at all the words. It may take four or five flashes for your tutee to understand and do what is directed on the card.

4. Each time the card is flashed urge your tutee to skip the words already read and read the next words. (A poor reader tends to start over no matter how many times he has read it.)

5. After the reader has mastered one direction flash card, prepare cards with two or more related directions, such as "Pick up the book and turn to page 10".

Instructional Principle

Often, poor readers start at the beginning of a passage and slowly read every word no matter what the reading purpose. This strategy requires them to quickly read what they already know and read carefully that which they do not know.

SIMPLE PREDICTING

Description

These activities require the tutee to use his brain to predict simple and obvious things.

A. Wallet Predicting

Directions

1. Give the tutee an object or situation that will allow him to make sensible predictions and later confirm them.
2. The tutor puts a wallet or purse in front of the tutee.
3. The tutor asks the tutee to guess what is in the wallet or purse.
4. Let the tutee find out how many of the guesses were correct.

B. Number Predicting

Directions

1. Prepare 3x5 cards with easily predicted patterns such as 2,4, _____, 8, 10 . . . or a, b, _____, d, e, _____, g, h, i.
2. Make the patterns increasingly more difficult.
3. Help the tutee to figure out meaning even when he does not have all the information.

C. Prepared-Stories Prediction

Directions

1. Write with the tutee's help a simple, short story with the tutee as the main character. You might take a headline from a newspaper and insert the tutee's name into the headline. For example, if a headline reads "Clark Hits Home Run to Win Game", change the headline by inserting your tutee's name, e.g., "John Smith Hits Home Run to Win Game".
2. Have the tutee read each paragraph of the story after you and he have written it with his name inserted.
3. Ask your tutee to predict what is going to happen next.
4. If your tutee finds the story too difficult to read independently, read the passage out loud, but still make predictions after each paragraph.

Instructional Principle

Usually the brain precedes the eyes when one is reading and comprehending. This makes reading easier because the brain "shares the work". Good readers are always guessing and predicting what comes next. They do this almost unconsciously.

Poor readers tend to be low risk takers and seldom make predictions. This and similar strategies help them realize how using their brains can help them become better readers.

PROFILE THREE

Profile Three adults are able to read many sight words and much environmental print. They have a much higher independent (.7 vs. 2.7) and instructional level (1.3 vs. 4.1) than Profile Two learners. Like Profile Two adults, these individuals had estimated potential levels within the fifth and sixth grade ranges.

The main problem most Profile Three learners have is a "misunderstanding" of the reading process. This "misunderstanding" of the goal of reading is what impedes their progress. Eighty percent (80%) of adults in this profile told us reading is either a process of sounding out words or of memorizing vocabulary. Only twenty percent (20%) told us reading is a process of understanding print.

One woman in this profile had been working in a phonics book for eight months. She was making a little progress. She said "I never learned my phonics when I was little and now I'm trying to get it right." Her overattention to phonics along with an auditory discrimination problem easily explains why she was not improving.

Another learner was working hard attempting to learn a basic sight word list. He carried flash cards with him and "practiced" regularly. "I've got to get the words first. Then I'll be able to read." It did not occur to him that most sight words are learned best in context, i.e., by reading.

The main task for individuals working with Profile Three adults is to encourage them to realize that reading is a quest for meaning, not a process of sounding out or memorizing vocabulary. We are extremely optimistic about Profile Three learners. We feel they would work very well with volunteer tutors who would encourage them to read for meaning.

Profile Two strategies may also be used with this group if appropriate. The following are also suggested:

GOOD READER RULES

Description

A complete description of these rules is in Chapter Five, Strategy 12. We suggest you refer to the previous explanation provided.

A. GOOD READERS ARE ACTIVE READERS.
B. GOOD READERS TAKE CHANCES.
C. GOOD READERS GUESS AT WORDS.
D. GOOD READERS READ AS THOUGH THEY EXPECT THE MATERIAL TO MAKE SENSE.
E. GOOD READERS TRY NOT TO READ TOO SLOWLY.
F. GOOD READERS CHANGE THEIR APPROACH DEPENDING UPON THE MATERIAL THEY ARE READING.

Instructional Principle

Profile Three readers like Profile Two readers often view reading as a process of knowing individual words or being able to sound out every word. They do not understand that the goal of reading is to make sense of print. This misnotion means they give very little emphasis to the meaning of print. We recommend that you teach and review the "Good Reader Rules" to the Profile Three readers during each tutoring session.

ALTERNATE MODEL READING

Description

Model Reading is a strategy used to increase reading speed. It is helpful for readers who read so slowly and deliberately that they often do not know what the sentence or passage is about because they took so much time to reach the end of it. The tutor models for them how a good reader can read quickly for comprehension.

Directions

1. The tutor quickly reads a phrase such as a prepositional phrase, noun clause, verb phrase, etc. in the sentence and stops.
2. The tutee is directed to read immediately starting at the point the tutor stopped and read approximately the next phrase. The tutee will be told to read as quickly as did the tutor.
3. The tutor will jump in, interrupting the tutee at the end of a phrase, and read the next phrase and stop.
4. They will alternately read, with the tutor controlling the pace as well as the stop and start places in the text.
5. Demand that the reader speed up to match the tutor's reading rate. Make it a challenge and a game.

Instructional Principle

A misnotion of the goal of reading as well as anxiety about one's ability to read cause many readers to read far too slowly. The intent of this strategy is to break the tutee's habit of reading slowly and inefficiently.

An Alternative Strategy

ECHO READING

Instead of the tutor and tutee alternating in their reading, the tutee reads along with the tutor at the pace the tutor dictates. This will speed up the oral reading of your tutee and increase fluency. We suggest beginning with passages no longer than 150 to 200 words.

PREDICTING AND CONFIRMING: Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA)

Description

This strategy encourages the tutee to make predictions about what is coming next as he is reading. It helps tutees read purposefully by encouraging them to determine if their predictions were right or wrong.

Directions

1. Select an interesting story and ask your tutee to look at the title and at any pictures accompanying the text.

2. Then, ask him to make predictions about what he thinks the story is going to be about. Jot down these predictions on an index card or a sheet of paper.

3. Next ask your tutee to read the first few paragraphs (or up to the first page) to see if his predictions are right or wrong. Stop and return to the predictions.

4. If the predictions were on the right track, compliment the tutee and have him make further predictions about what is going to happen in the next section.

5. If the predictions were incorrect, discuss why that might have happened. Make new predictions about what is going to happen in the next paragraph, section, or page.

6. Go through the entire story stopping at logical places and confirm or disconfirm prior predictions. Always make new predictions.

7. Placing the predictions on an index card or sheet of paper is helpful. Incorrect predictions can be crossed out and correct ones can be circled or checked.

Instructional Principle

This strategy reinforces the concept that reading is a thinking activity in which the brain makes meaning. Frank Smith, in Reading Without Nonsense (1985), stated that reading is "only incidentally visual". The brain's role in processing information is central to the reading process. Profile Three readers place too much emphasis upon the visual aspect of decoding print rather than upon meaning making.

Predicting and confirming will force your tutee to think about what he is going to read before his eyes actually see the print. This strategy assists your tutee to read with purpose to find out if his predictions were right or wrong.

MYSTERY WORDS

Description

A person, place or thing is labeled by a nonsense "mystery" word. The tutee is instructed to read, working through clues, sentence by sentence, to determine what the mystery word is.

Directions

1. Make up a story about a person, place or thing. Use the mystery word in your title. For example:

GOOSH
Goosh is my favorite food.
There are many types of goosh.
Goosh comes in various sizes.
I had goosh at my birthday party.
Some of my friends burned their mouths
when they ate goosh.
I like a lot of cheese on my goosh.
My friend likes pepperoni on her goosh. (Pizza)

OR

YUKKY YUKKERS
I am a yukky yukker.
I live in your home.
I like it when you leave your house in a mess.
Please don't do your dishes.
Please leave your food out.
I like to eat anything, even garbage.
I don't like bright lights; I usually come out
when it's dark.
People don't like me.
They try to kill me with powders and sprays.
I am black and buggy. (Cockroach)

2. Use a piece of paper to cover up the story except for the title. Ask your tutee to make predictions based on the nonsense word title. Write down his predictions.

3. Uncover the first line and ask your tutee to read it. Return to his predictions and cross out any he thinks are wrong. Encourage new predictions.

4. Uncover the next line. Again cross out predictions your tutee thinks are wrong and encourage him to make new predictions.

5. Repeat this procedure throughout the remaining lines until the mystery word is discovered.

6. Ask your tutee to tell you what words were most helpful in helping him decide what the mystery word stood for.

7. Point out and discuss how certain key words carried most of the meaning.

Instructional Principle

This strategy causes the reader's brain to activate before his eyes see the print. Explain that if the brain is working and predicting before the eyes see the print, then the visual part of reading becomes much easier. Reinforce that one can read much faster, efficiently, and gain more meaning if the brain stays ahead of the eyes by making predictions.

PROFILE FOUR

Profile Four learners differ from others we have discussed in many ways. Forty percent (40%) of these adults referred themselves. They heard about our services and sought assistance. In instances of self-referrals, many chose not to participate in a formalized program but to seek tutoring from a family member or to hire a private tutor.

Profile Four adults are readers. They can read things such as newspapers, the TV Guide and magazines. Their average independent level is 5.7 and instructional level is 7.2. "Content area" materials such as history and science caused them many problems. These individuals have the capacity to read at the high school level, appear to have average range intelligence, and have far fewer language and physical disabilities than the other groups.

Most individuals in Profile Four had completed ten (10) years of school. Often their reason for dropping out of school was to marry or to go to work. One woman in this profile owned her own business and employed thirty people. She wanted to improve her reading skills as she had just purchased a computer for her business.

Many learners in this profile could read but often chose not to. Several told us they had never read a book in their entire life. Often, these adults had very little confidence with respect to their academic abilities. This lack of self-confidence coupled with years of systematically avoiding print accounts for their reading problems. One man in Profile Four was employed in a local prison. The prison offered a GED class and he was thinking about enrolling. He felt inferior because his wife was a high school graduate. He said, "Could you just tell me if I'm smart enough to succeed?" Indeed, he enrolled in the class and received a GED eight months later.

We recommend the following strategies for Profile Four learners:

TEXT MAPPING

Description

A text map is a unique type of outline one makes after reading an article, a story, or a chapter in a textbook. The reader is required to make relationships between key concepts.

Directions

1. Find an interesting article you feel your student would enjoy reading. After reading the article silently, decide what the main topic of the article is. Ask your learner to write down the main topics on a piece of paper.

2. Next list key concepts or ideas which relate to the main topic. These should be written below the main topic.

3. On a separate sheet of paper write the main topic in the center of the page. Draw a circle around what you have written.

4. Pick the first key concept and put that on the paper, circle it and draw a line from the middle circle to the main topic circle. Select the second key concept and decide if that concept relates more to the first key concept or to the main topic. If it relates more closely to the main topic, list it, draw a circle around it and connect it to the main idea. If it relates more closely to the first key concept, connect it to that idea.

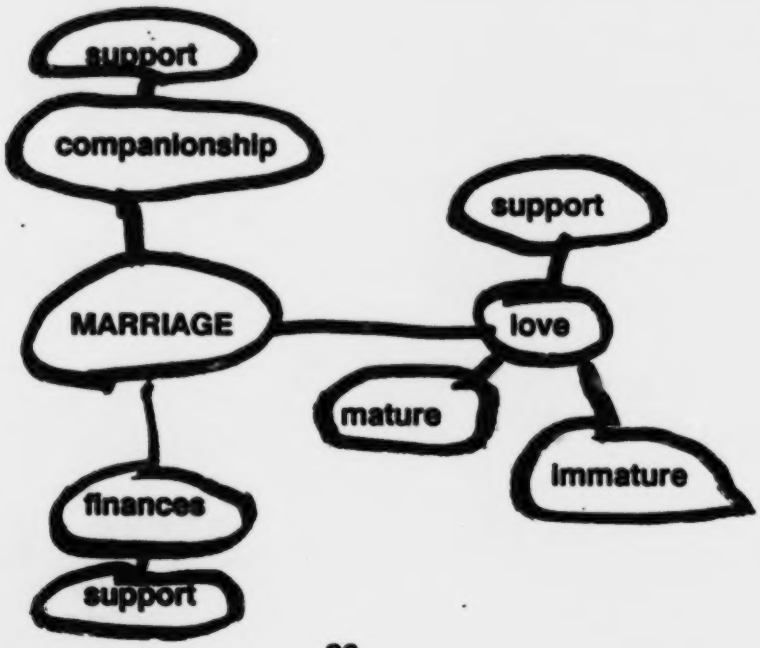
5. Continue this procedure until all the key concepts have been listed and connected.

6. Now invite your learner to reread the article to decide if any sub-topics need to be listed. If this is the case list them and connect them to the concepts to which they relate.

As an example, suppose you have read an article about marriage. The key concepts discussed are love, finances, companionship and support. Sub-topics include the ideas of mature love and immature love. First, "marriage" is written in the center of the page. Next "love" in marriage is written and placed in a circle that is connected to "marriage". Now the term "finances" is discussed. The reader must decide if "finances" relates specifically to "love" or more generally to "marriage". "Support" relates both to "love" and "marriage" so it is listed and connected twice. "Companionship" is connected to "marriage". The terms "mature" and "immature" relate to love so they are connected as illustrated.

Marriage

Major topics (concepts)	Sub-points
love	mature
economics	love
companionship	immature
support	



7. Ask your student to explain his map to you and revise it if necessary.

Instructional Principle

The strategy requires the reader to read for major concepts and to relate these concepts to each other as well as to the main topic. Information is related rather than separated which helps the reader make meaning. In addition, this strategy helps the reader relate the specific information to the general information.

KEY WORD SEARCH STRATEGIES

Description

These strategies require the tutee to find the key words (that carry the meaning of sentences and passages).

A. Key Word Version

1. Make up a fairly complex sentence such as: "A stooped and weary old man in faded blue jeans came to the door looking for work."

2. Ask your tutee to read the sentence and briefly tell what it said.

3. Then use a pen or magic marker and black out all but the essential words in the sentence (man, came, door, looking, work). While you do this, ask your tutee to write a shortened version of the sentence using the key words. Then compare your version with his to see if they have the same meaning. Discuss any differences.

B. Key Word Search

1. Ask your tutee to locate several short passages which he feels you will not have read and bring those to the tutoring session. Tutors should do the same thing. Begin this activity by asking your tutee to quickly read one of the short passages he brought.

2. After reading the passages silently, ask him to make small check marks above the key words.

3. Then, instruct him to black out every third word he checked and read the remaining words aloud to you.

4. It's your job to listen and tell your tutee what you think the passage is about from these key words. Discuss any differences.

5. Reverse the procedure. This time the tutor selects and narrows down words from a different passage.

6. Continue the procedure until you and your tutee have each read and discussed three or four passages.

C. Deletion of non-key words

1. Provide your tutee with a selection where all the unessential words have been deleted by you. Leave short blank spaces to indicate where a word was present.

2. Ask your tutee to silently read the prepared selection.

3. After your tutee has read through the entire passage, talk about what was read. Then ask him to fill in the deleted words.

4. Compare your tutee's version with the original text. Discuss any differences.

Instructional Principle

Profile Four readers tend to process every word when they read. When they have limited prior knowledge, they read too slowly to gain meaning. These key word strategies demonstrate how to locate the key words; words which carry the meaning of a sentence and passage. Locating key words increases reading speed and comprehension. Emphasize that good readers automatically pick out the key words and "chunk" or organize them into meaningful wholes. They do not think about or give equal visual attention to every "an", "the" or "these".

KEY WORD PREDICTING STRATEGIES

Description

A. Key Word Comic Strips

1. Cut comic strips into frames and paste each frame to an index card.

2. Then, pick out and list one key word from each comic strip frame. Write this key word on the other side of the index card.

3. Show your tutee the key word from frame one. Ask him to predict what will take place in frame one.

4. Let him see frame one for five seconds and invite him to make any changes he wishes.

5. Continue this procedure with each frame, allowing only five seconds per frame.

6. Finally, provide your tutee with all the comic frames. Discuss the accuracy of his predictions.

B. Key Word Story Categorizing

1. Locate a short story which will be of interest to your tutee. Select key words from the story and put them into the following categories: setting, characters, problem, plot, and ending.

2. Show these "category" key words to your tutee and ask him to predict what he thinks the story will be about. Jot down these predictions.

3. Ask your tutee to read and confirm or disconfirm his predictions. Discuss which ones were correct and why some may not have been correct.

C. Key Word Predicting

1. Select an article of approximately 500-700 words. Initially these articles should be of high interest to your tutee; later the articles can focus more on "content text" such as science, social studies, etc.

2. Identify 12-15 key words from the article. Be sure these words carry the major points and meaning of the article. Write these words on an index card.

3. Show the card to your tutee and ask him to make predictions about the article's content.

4. Next, ask your tutee to read the article and determine how close his predictions were.

5. After this strategy has been done several times, reverse the procedure and invite your tutee to bring an article with selected key words for you to read.

Instructional Principle

These key word predicting strategies are designed to help readers put their "brains ahead of their eyes. This forces purposeful reading because predictions involve readers; they want to read in order to find out whether their predictions were right or wrong. In addition, this activity helps one learn what key words are, how they carry passage meaning, and how to find them on their own. Key word strategies help readers become more efficient and effective meaning makers.

SUMMARIZING STRATEGIES

Description

These summarizing strategies require readers to reduce the information read into main idea statements.

A. About Point

1. Select an interesting paragraph and ask your tutee to read it.
2. After reading ask him to tell what the paragraph is about in one or two words.
3. Next, expand those points to seven or so words which tell the main point of the paragraph.

Example:

About: _____ _____
Point: _____ _____ _____ _____
_____ _____ _____

B. GIST (Cunningham, 1982)

1. Select a paragraph of interest to your tutee.
2. Ask him to read the first sentence and summarize it in five words or less.
3. The second sentence is read and both sentences are summarized in eight words or less.
4. The third sentence is then read and sentences 1, 2, and 3 are summarized in 15 words or less.
5. Continue for the remainder of the paragraph to make one sentence with 15 words or less that best summarize the paragraph.

Instructional Principle

The ability to summarize the main idea of a paragraph is difficult for poor readers. This skill is an important part of GED type tests. These strategies along with the Key Word strategies help readers "chunk" information into meaningful summaries.

CONCLUSIONS AND CONCERNS

We have described four profiles of adults with reading disabilities and shared instructional strategies which appear to work best with these learners. Patterns and problems are evident for those working in literacy projects.

* Of the 250 adults we have tested, forty-five percent (45%) had auditory discrimination problems which suggests a phonics based program will be ineffective. Of particular concern are adults in Profiles One and Two. Of these Profiles, fifty-four percent (54%) had auditory discrimination problems.

  Sixty-six percent (66%) had vision problems. Of the sixty-six percent (66%) who had vision problems, sixty-three percent (63%) had near point problems. The need for vision and hearing tests among this population is evident.

* Slightly over half of the adults in Profile One and over forty percent (40%) of the adults in Profile Two were referred by volunteer projects. Adults who appeared to have the most disabilities were receiving the least amount of tutoring, usually only 1 1/2 hours per week. Our experience is that these learners need seven to twelve hours per week when they are actively engaged in learning if they are to improve.

* Overall, eighty-two percent (82%) of the adults we tested had a "misunderstanding" of the reading process. Previous research (Keefe and Meyer, 1980) indicates that adults who do not understand that reading is a "meaning making" process progress at a rate of about seventy-five percent (75%) slower than learners who understand that reading is a process of gaining meaning from text. The need to emphasize the "meaning making" aspect of reading cannot be overemphasized if adult literacy instruction is to be successful.

* Most of the volunteers we served told us they had received from six to twelve hours of initial tutor training. In most instances, we feel this is simply not enough training to help someone be a successful tutor. No one volunteers to do a bad job. Tutors need additional support.

* Almost all instructional strategies for our four profiles center on the notion that the brain must be activated to search for meaning. We favor activities which force learners with reading disabilities to use their intuitive knowledge of language and the world instead of emphasizing phonics, word attack and isolated comprehension drills.

Finally, the four profiles we have described are not meant to be "cast in stone". They should be considered "working models" in need of much refinement. Tutors and ABE instructors are encouraged to use any or all of the strategies we've outlined if they feel these will be effective with their learners.

We realize that the use of grade equivalencies is difficult to apply to adults. We have used the term as a general reference point to clarify our profiles.

While the strategies described here were written for a "one to one" setting, almost all of them can be modified for larger groups. We appreciate comments and suggestions from our readers. We hope you'll write or call us with your concerns and ideas. We can be reached at:

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